programme is organised by the Foreign Service Institute covering India's Foreign Policy, International relations, International Law, Diplomacy, International Economic and Commercial relations, Defence and Security issues, besides training in a Foreign Language (French).

Indian Scientists sent back by US

2092. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI AKHILESH DAS:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the US has sent back a number of scientists working on various American research projects; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the US administration also refused Visas to Indian scientists proposing to visit America in connection with various conferences and other assignments; if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction and response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Seven scientists belonging to the national Institute of Standards & Technology, USA and one scientist from Argonne National Laboratory, USA were asked to leave the United States. These scientists were from the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institute of Science (IIS). The visa application of Dr. Chidambaram, Chairman Atomic Energy Commission, was returned and he was informed that current US visa procedures were under review as a result of India's nuclear tests.

(c) The decision to grant a Visa is a sovereign right of the country concerned. India believes that measures such as denial of Visas undermine the generally accepted principles of free movements of scientists and the universality of science. Government does not agree with any targetted policy of denying visas, particularly those that come in the way of scientific exchange and interaction. Government has taken up this issue with the United States and will continue to pursue it.

Cell for Ayurveda in SAARC Secretariat

2093. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to set-up a cell for Ayurveda in the SAARC Secretariat; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Foreign Tours

2094. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the foreign tours undertaken by different Union Ministers and Ministers of State, indicating the purpose there of, during the last nine months and the expenditure in foriegn exchange and otherwise incurred thereon; and

(b) the comparative figures of expenditure in terms of foreign exchange and otherwise during the corresponding period during the last two years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Talks with Asean Countries

2095. DR. KARAN SINGH:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether at the last ASEAN (ARF) mee held at Colombo, Laos, Singapore and Vietnan supported India, to justify India's security concerns that led to India conducting N-Test in May this year;